KITCHEN SINK COMIX
No. 4
MATURE READERS
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DEATH RATTLE
Rand Holmes © 1986

The fourth issue of ***Death Rattle*** boasts a muscular lineup—32 full pages worth of bug-eyed monsters, weird scientists, cosmic Indians and nasty individuals you wouldn't necessarily want to meet on the street.

And those are only the contributors!

But seriously, can I get a witness here? Will somebody say "amen" or maybe just a simple "hubba hubba" for:

☆**Rand Holmes**, who kicks it off with his fabulous pencil, ink and color tribute to **Wally Wood's** cover artistry, with its inside view of spaceship doodads, its tentacled BEM, and the caged woman looking on;

☆**Mike Baron,** who took time off from ***Nexus*** and ***Badger*** to write "Power of Prayer" (hallelulah!), a tasty little morsel about interspecies appetite, spicily illustrated by Holmes, with mouth-watering colors by **Ray Fehrenbach;**

☆**Sam Kieth**, who gave his ***MAGE*** inking chores a rest to collaborate with **John Holland** on "Killing Time," which captures in the only way possible—on paper, with colors by Fehrenbach—the life story of a somewhat strange young sinner, different from you and me;

☆**Doug Erb**, who, aided by colorist **Mike Newhall,** explores the unwholesome and quite possibly deranged mind of an obsessed scientist, in the three-page eye-opener "Sight Unseen;"

☆And **Jaxon**, abetted by Newhall, who checks in with the second chapter of his epic tale about "Bulto," the lovable but misunderstood cosmic deity (where's that "Amen Corner?") whose superficial resemblance to a giant slug makes him an awesome vision to behold, at least while you're having lunch.

Yes, you may find yourself raving in the aisles when you read this ***Death Rattle***, although we sincerely hope not. We hope it will thrill, chill, slice, dice, and possibly even mildly amuse you. We want to **urge** you **now** to totally immerse yourself in this 32-page, no-ads-in-the-middle, brightly colored tract. Just drop your two bucks in the plate.

In issue 5 of ***Death Rattle,*** we'll be featuring **Mike Baron** and **Rand Holmes** teaming up again on "Junkyard Dog," a lengthy story about prison life out in the sticks. The outer space sticks. Cover by Holmes. We're also featuring part 3 of "Bulto" by **Jaxon,** and we have a surprise planned we know you'll enjoy.

Watch for *Death Rattle* No. 5 in JUNE.

STAFF

Editor/Publisher . . . . . **Denis Kitchen**
Story Editor . . . . . **Dave Schreiner**
Art Director . . . . . **Peter Poplaski**
Colorists . . . . . **Ray Fehrenbach**
. . . . . **and Mike Newhall**
Logo design . . . . . **Don Simpson**
Circulation . . . . . **Holly Brooks**

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

SPUT-SPUT-SPUTTER

SOMEWHERE OVER THE GUATEMALAN RAIN FOREST.

OHMIGOD! THE ENGINE'S DYING! WE'RE GOING TO *CRASH!*

LEWIS, YOU SPINELESS JELLYFISH! *SHUT UP!*

© Rand Holmes 86

IT FIGURES YOU'D CRACK AT THE FIRST SIGN OF TROUBLE. YOU COULDN'T EVEN PULL THE *TRIGGER!*

LISTEN GREER-- *KILLING* YOUR HUSBAND WASN'T MY IDEA!

NO? YOU SEEMED TO LIKE IT AT THE TIME.

HELP ME LOOK FOR A *FLAT SPOT* TO SET DOWN.

N3708K

I THINK HARRY *SABOTAGED* THE PLANE

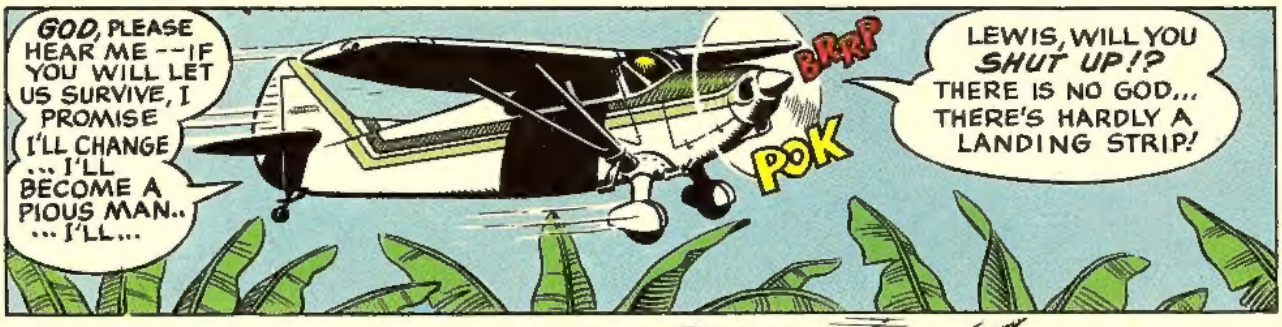
SPUT

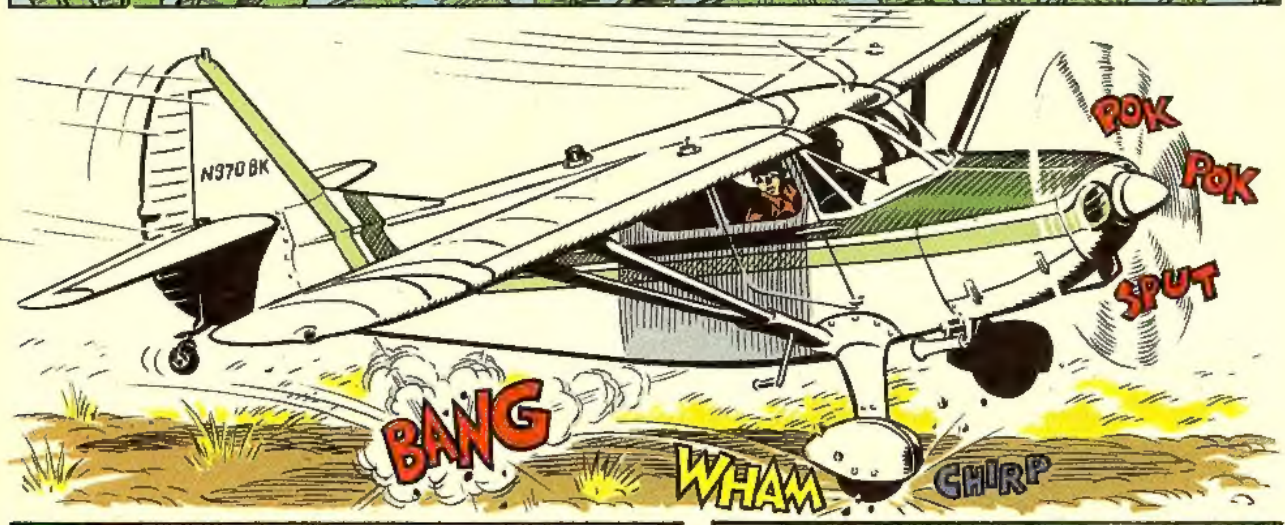
OH GOD, OH GOD-- --I NEVER SHOULD HAVE LET YOU TALK ME INTO THIS.

KOF

STORY: MIKE BARON ART: RAND HOLMES

THERE'S A SPOT --LOOKS LIKE IT USED TO BE A LANDING STRIP
THIS IS IT, LEWIS, WE'RE GOING DOWN.


GOD, PLEASE HEAR ME --IF YOU WILL LET US SURVIVE, I PROMISE I'LL CHANGE ... I'LL BECOME A PIOUS MAN.. ... I'LL...
BRRP
POK
LEWIS, WILL YOU SHUT UP!? THERE IS NO GOD... THERE'S HARDLY A LANDING STRIP!

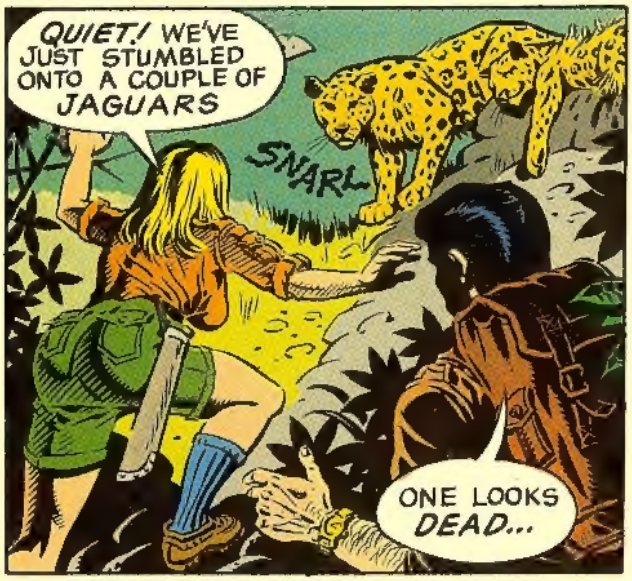

N370BK
POK
POK
SPUT
BANG
WHAM
CHIRP

WE MADE IT. BUT WHERE ARE WE? WE CAN'T RADIO FOR HELP--THEY'LL BE LOOKING FOR US BY NOW...
N370BK
LOOK GREER SOME KIND OF TRAIL THROUGH THE JUNGLE...

LET'S CONCEAL THE PLANE FIRST...
...JUST IN CASE

PHEW! THIS HEAT IS UNBEARABLE! I FEEL AWFUL!
I FEEL GREAT!
SIX YEARS THAT BASTARD KEPT ME IN A CAGE. BUT I WISED UP. IT ONLY TOOK ME SIX YEARS

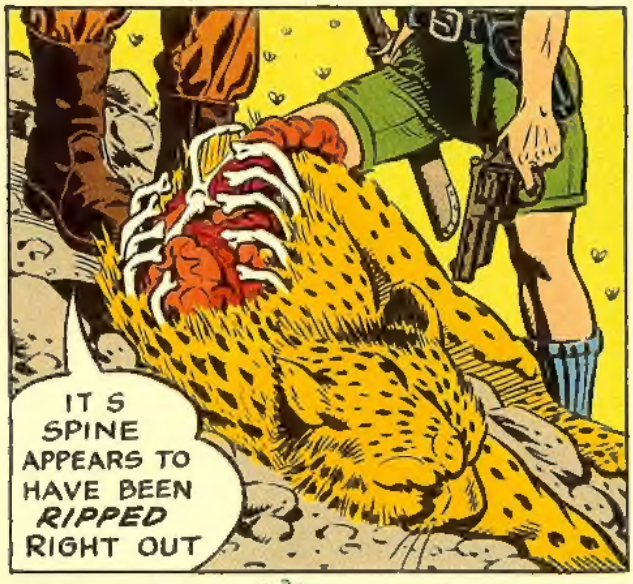
YOU WERE THE FINAL PIECE IN THE PUZZLE. WHEN YOU SHOWED UP I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO
DON'T LAY THAT TRIP ON MY HEAD! THIS WAS ALL YOUR IDEA!
KILLING HARRY, STEALING HIS DIAMONDS...


QUIET! WE'VE JUST STUMBLED ONTO A COUPLE OF JAGUARS
SNARL
ONE LOOKS DEAD...

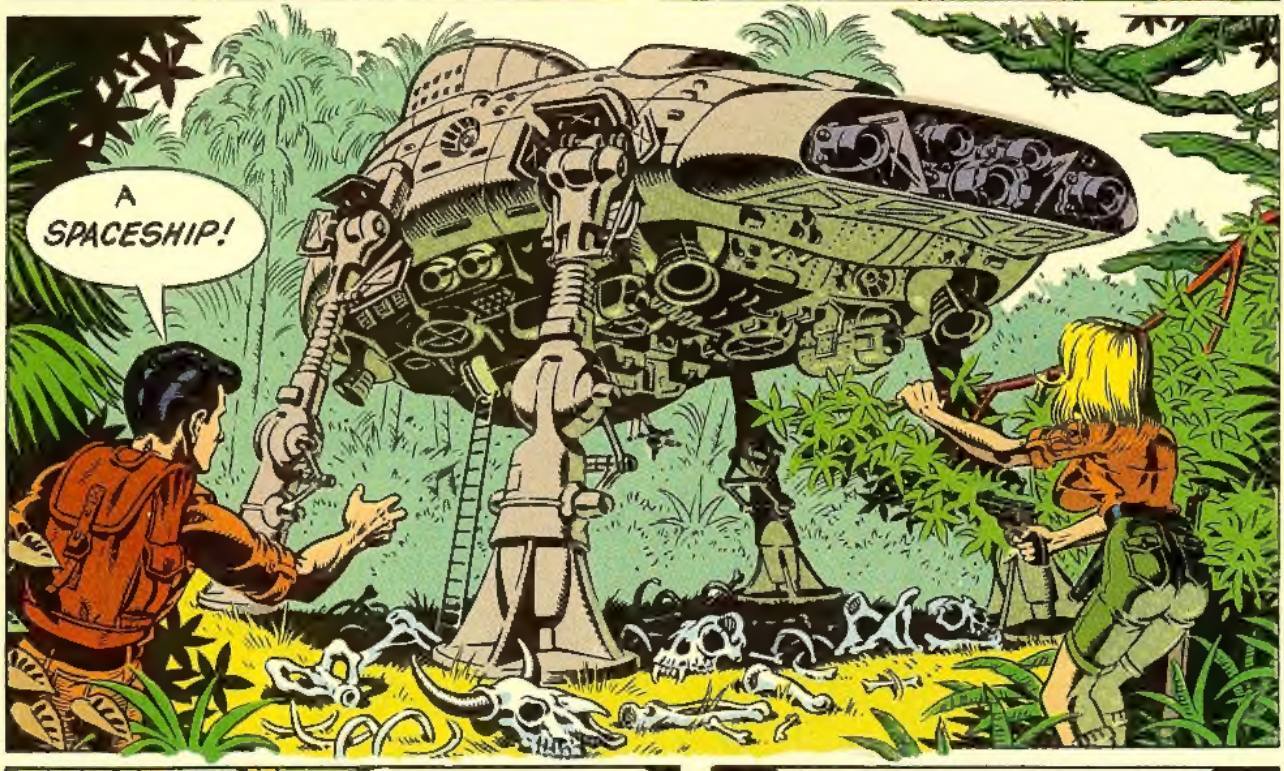
IT IS DEAD
...THE MATE MUST BE CRAZY... ...BE CAREFUL
OH JESUS! IT'S GOING TO JUMP!

BANG
BANG

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE OTHER ONE?
GREER... ..COME HERE!.. THIS IS UNBELIEVABLE


IT S SPINE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN RIPPED RIGHT OUT

LOOK LEWIS--THROUGH THE TREES--SOMETHING SHINING...


A SPACESHIP!

GREER WAIT! STAY AWAY FROM IT!
SHUT UP!

ARRGH!
LEWIS!

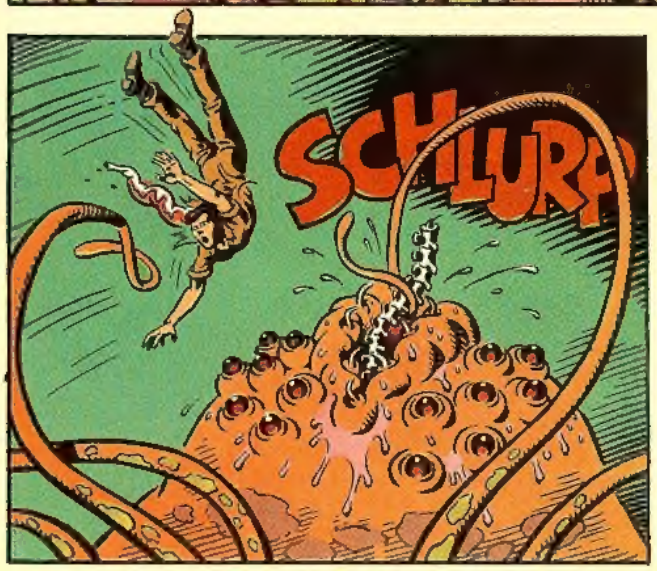
HELP ME! IT BURNS! IT BURNS!

BULLETS DON'T AFFECT IT!
BANG
BANG
BANG

IT'S DIGGING INTO MY BACK!

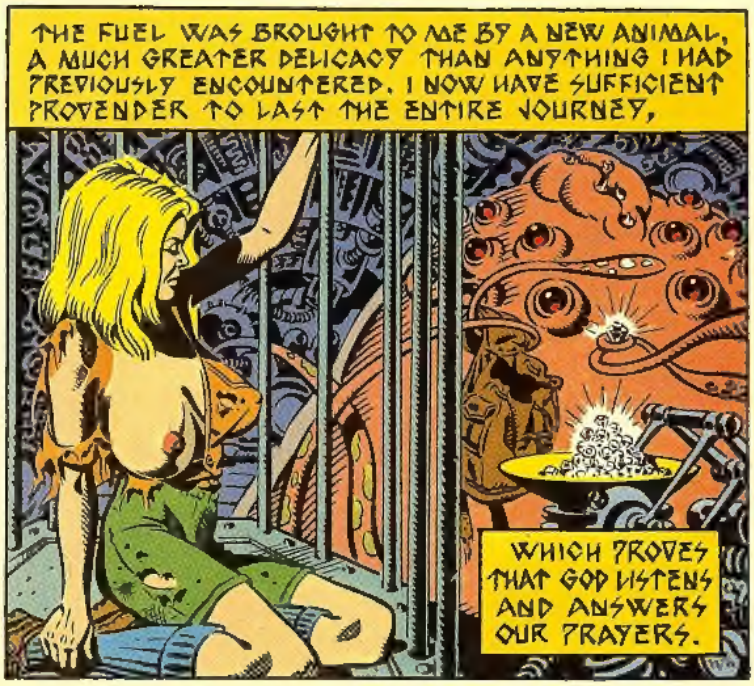
HELP MEEE!

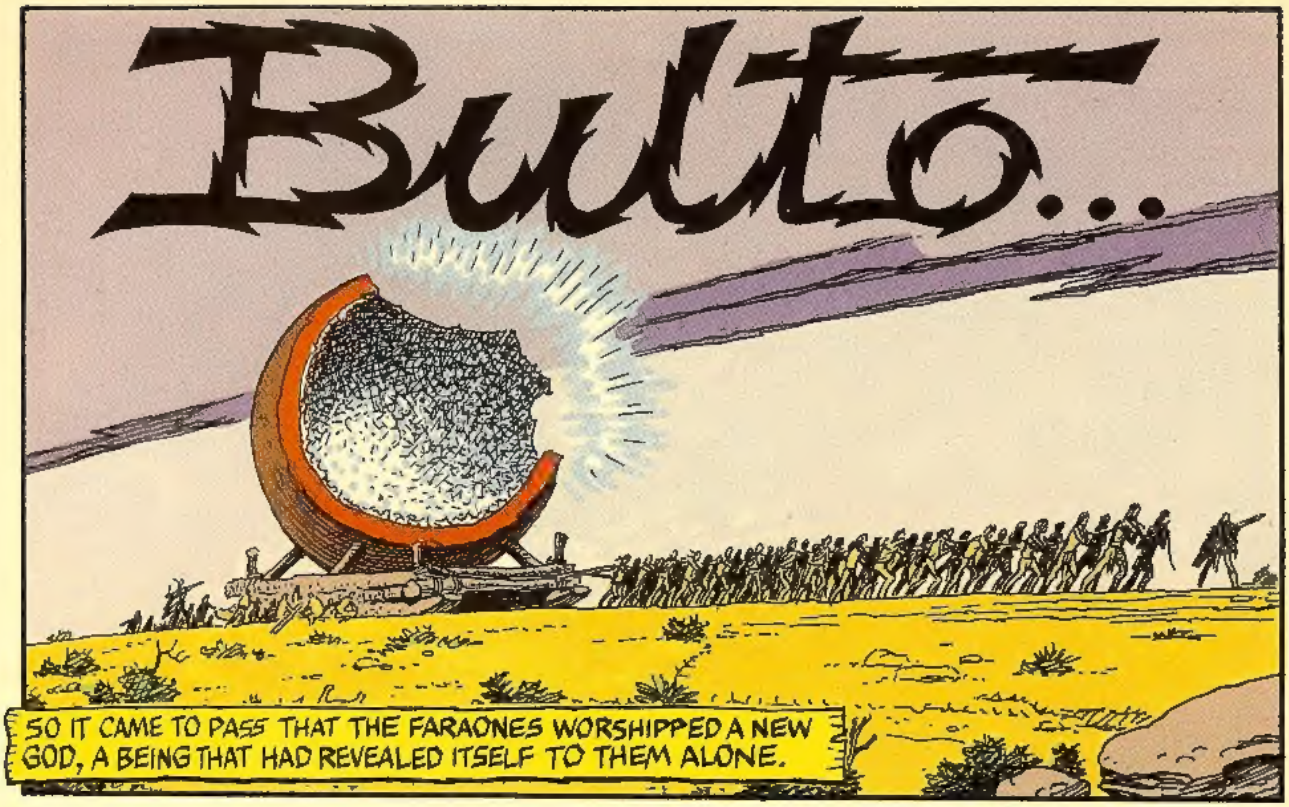
SCHLORK

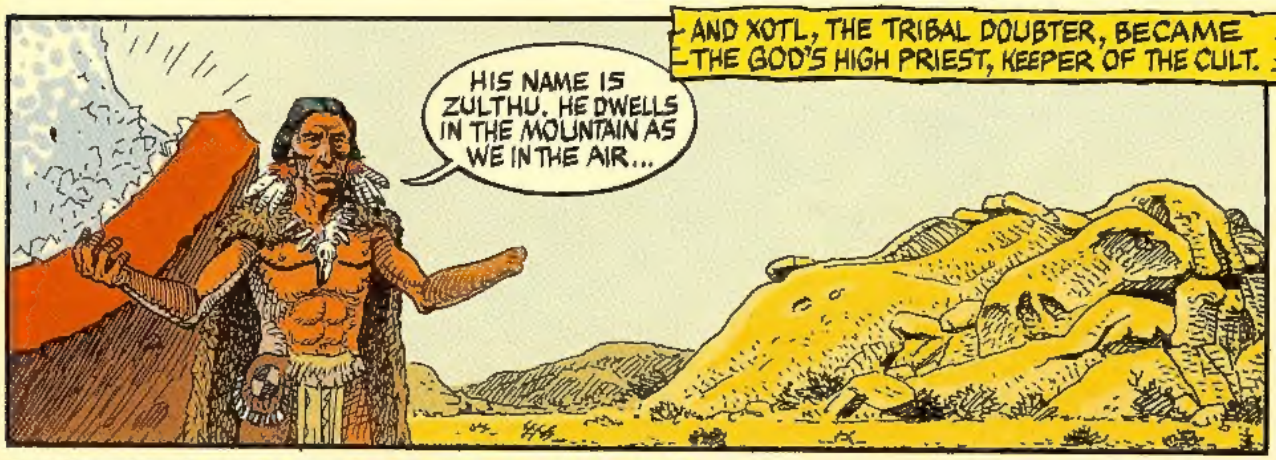

SCHLURP

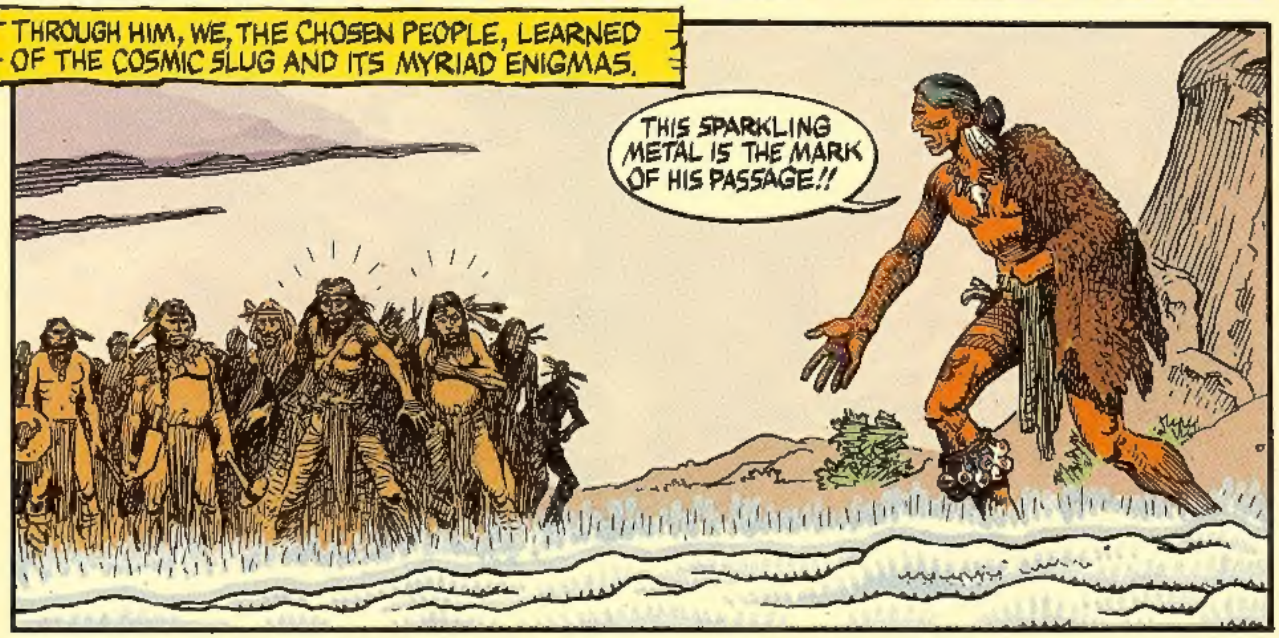
THWIP
NO! NOOO!

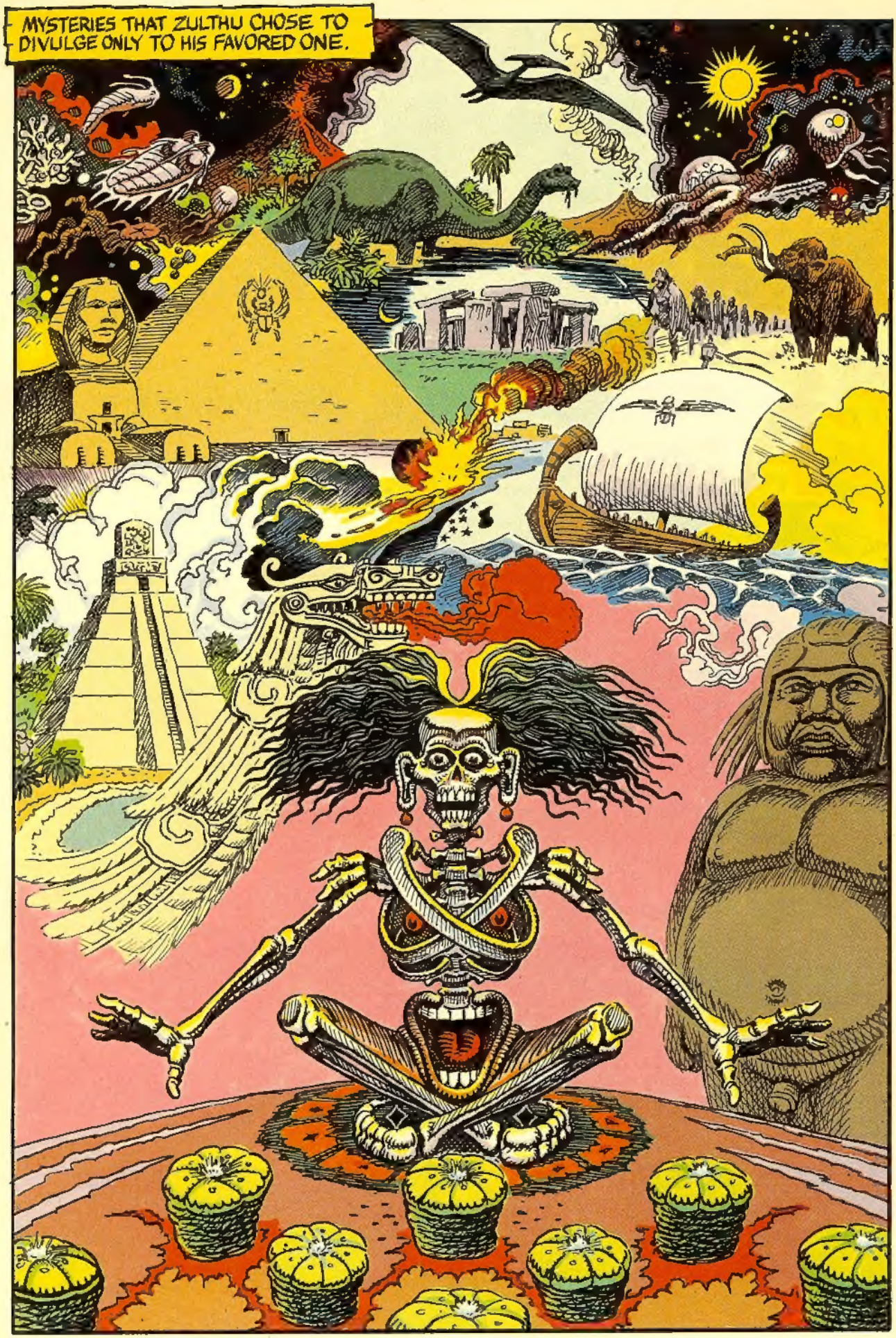
AFTER COUNTLESS CYCLES MAROONED ON THE THIRD PLANET OF THIS NAMELESS STAR, SUBSISTING ON UNPALATABLE LOCAL FAUNA, I HAVE FINALLY PROCURED THE FUEL NECESSARY FOR MY JOURNEY HOME....

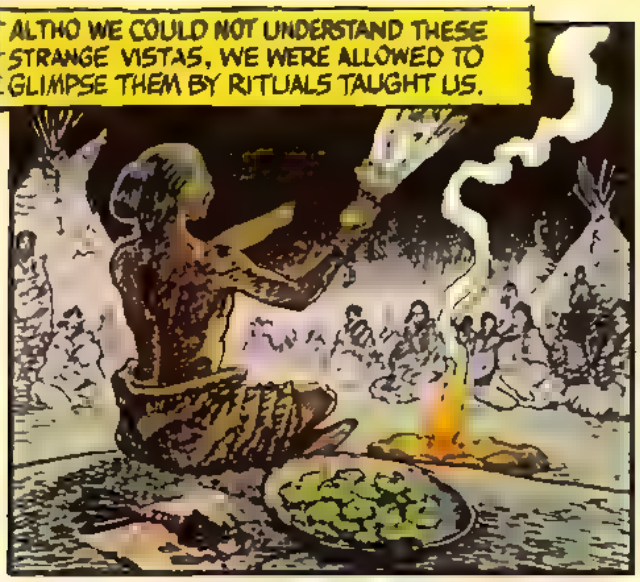

THE FUEL WAS BROUGHT TO ME BY A NEW ANIMAL, A MUCH GREATER DELICACY THAN ANYTHING I HAD PREVIOUSLY ENCOUNTERED. I NOW HAVE SUFFICIENT PROVENDER TO LAST THE ENTIRE JOURNEY,
WHICH PROVES THAT GOD LISTENS AND ANSWERS OUR PRAYERS.


Bulto...
SO IT CAME TO PASS THAT THE FARAONES WORSHIPPED A NEW GOD, A BEING THAT HAD REVEALED ITSELF TO THEM ALONE.


AND XOTL, THE TRIBAL DOUBTER, BECAME THE GOD'S HIGH PRIEST, KEEPER OF THE CULT.
HIS NAME IS ZULTHU. HE DWELLS IN THE MOUNTAIN AS WE IN THE AIR...

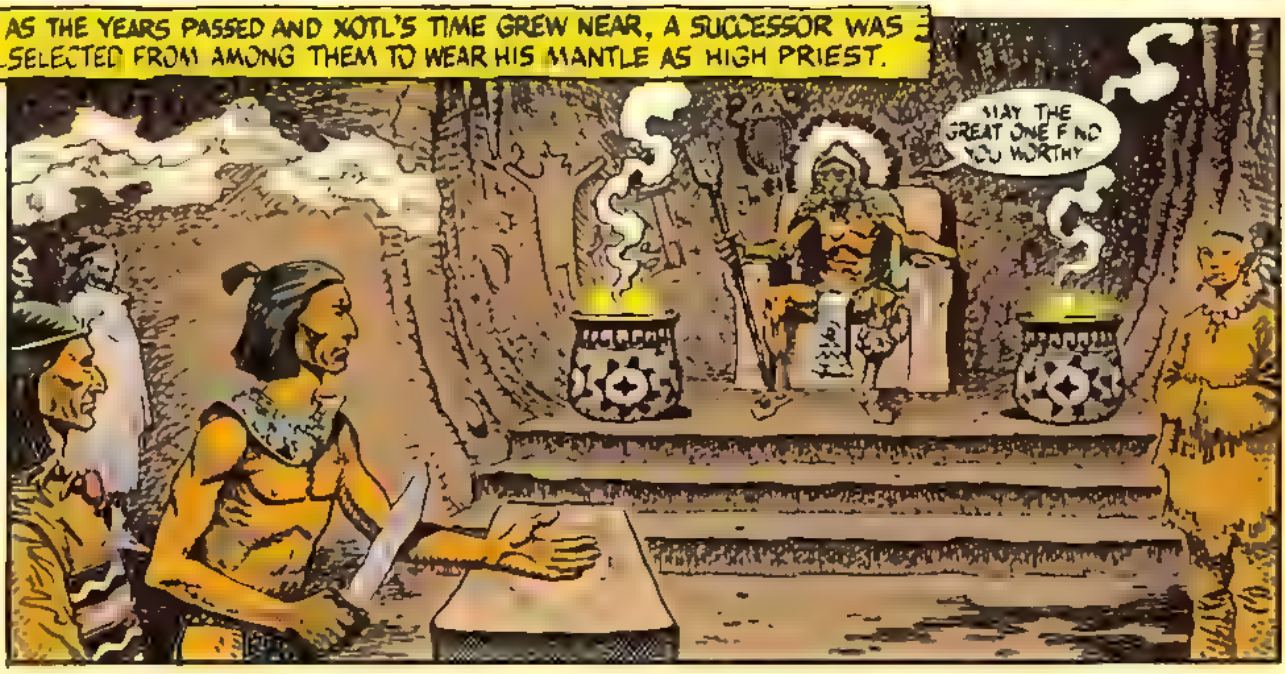

THROUGH HIM, WE, THE CHOSEN PEOPLE, LEARNED OF THE COSMIC SLUG AND ITS MYRIAD ENIGMAS.
THIS SPARKLING METAL IS THE MARK OF HIS PASSAGE!!


MYSTERIES THAT ZULTHU CHOSE TO DIVULGE ONLY TO HIS FAVORED ONE.


ALTHO WE COULD NOT UNDERSTAND THESE STRANGE VISTAS, WE WERE ALLOWED TO GLIMPSE THEM BY RITUALS TAUGHT US.

AS A MARK OF OUR RITES, WE WORE OBJECTS FASHIONED FROM THE GOD'S GLEAMING SWEAT.

SOME OF OUR MORE ADEPT SONS WERE INITIATED INTO THE SECRETS OF ZULTHU IN HIDDEN PLACES.


AS THE YEARS PASSED AND XOTL'S TIME GREW NEAR, A SUCCESSOR WAS SELECTED FROM AMONG THEM TO WEAR HIS MANTLE AS HIGH PRIEST.
MAY THE GREAT ONE FIND YOU WORTHY

AFTER HIM THERE FOLLOWED AN UNBROKEN CHAIN OF OTHERS...
AND THOUGH WE WANDERED FAR AND NEAR, THESE GRANITE HILLS WERE ALWAYS OUR SACRED GROUND...
THESE CAVES OUR HOLY PLACES, FOR HERE ZULTHU ABIDES AND HERE THE FARAONES FIRST WELCOMED HIM TO THIS DIMENSION.
ZULTHU, TAKE THIS MAIDEN AS A TOKEN OF OUR DEVOTION...

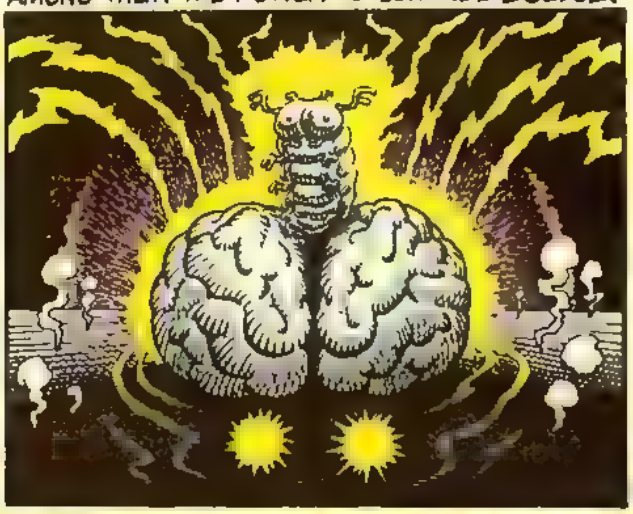
IN RETURN HE GAVE US THE GOD-DOG.
A CREATURE THAT RELINQUISHED IT'S POWER TO SOAR THE CELESTIAL HEIGHTS...
...SO THAT WE MIGHT FLY UPON THE WINGS OF THE WIND...
TO SCATTER OUR ENEMIES BEFORE US AND KEEP ZULTHU'S SECRET SAFE!

GUIDED BY MANY HOLY MEN, THIS FORMIDABLE ALLIANCE LASTED FOR GENERATIONS. OUR POWER GREW...

TAKE THESE, OUR FAIREST DAUGHTERS, AS OFFERINGS FOR THE GREAT ONE.

IN THE YEAR OF FROTHING SKUNK, THE HONOR OF HIGH SHAMAN FELL TO ME, COYOTE TWO FEET. I OFFERED MY HAND TO ZULTHU IN THE GRAND TRADITION.

THE GREAT ONE REVEALED MANY SECRETS TO ME, AMONG THEM THE POWER TO CONTROL **BULTOS.**



BULTOS, THE SPIRITS THAT LINGER ON EARTH AFTER DEATH AND MAY BE BENT TO THE WILL OF THE LIVING, IF ONE IS WISE ENOUGH—OR **STRONG** ENOUGH.

REMAIN HERE UNTIL I COMMAND YOU!

BUT THEN, INTERRUPTING MY ARCANE PURSUITS, TWO STRANGERS CAME. OF THESE, THE HATED COMANCHES, SWEEPING DOWN FROM THE HIGH PLAINS, WERE THE MOST TO BE FEARED.

FOR THEY, TOO, HAD THE GOD-DOG AND USED IT WITH RUTHLESS EFFICIENCY!

IN THE STILLNESS OF NIGHT THEY FELL UPON OUR SLEEPING CAMPS

THEY INVADED OUR OLD HUNTING GROUNDS AND KEPT US FROM TAKING THE BUFFALO.

THE PLAINS BECAME A VAST FARAON GRAVEYARD. WE WERE DRIVEN BACK EVER CLOSER TO OUR SACRED HILLS AND THE SECRET GUARDED THERE.

COMPARED TO SUCH FIERCE ENEMIES, THE SPANIARDS FROM THE SOUTH WERE ALMOST WELCOME ARRIVALS.

WE DID NOT MIND EVEN WHEN THEY BUILT A FORT IN OUR MIDST.

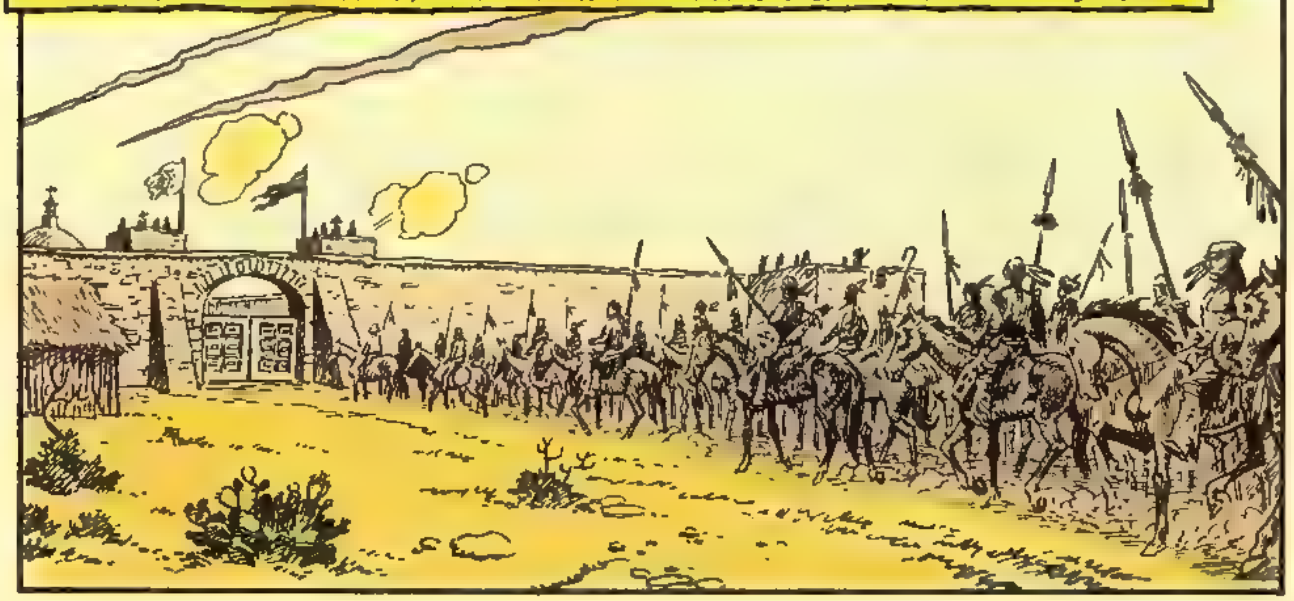
* "THE FARAONES TAKE OUR WOMEN, MAKE US THEIR SLAVES..."

AND THE GREY-ROBES, ALWAYS HOPING TO WIN OUR FRIENDSHIP, KEPT THE SOLDIERS IN THEIR LITTLE FORT.

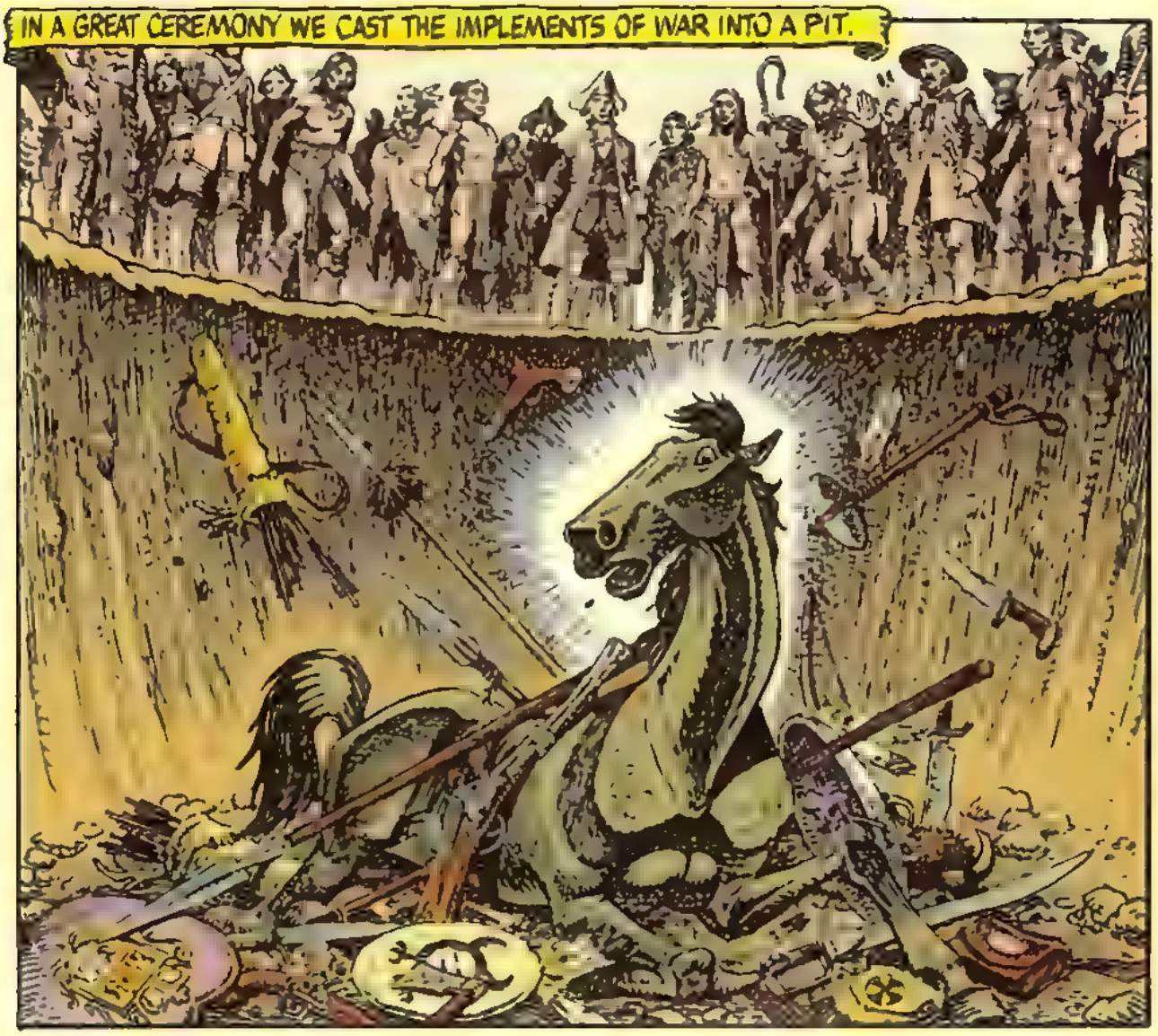
YES, THE COMANCHES – NOT THE SPANISH – WERE THE ONES TO BE FEARED. THEIR RAIDS NEVER CEASED, AND THE WAILING OF OUR WOMEN GAVE US NO REST.

OUR LAND WAS FILLED WITH WANDERING BULTOS; THEIR PITIFUL CRIES FOR RELEASE ECHOED ON THE FOUR WINDS.

SO OUR WISE MEN DEVISED A PLAN. WE WENT TO THE PLACE CALLED SAN ANTONIO DE BÉXAR.

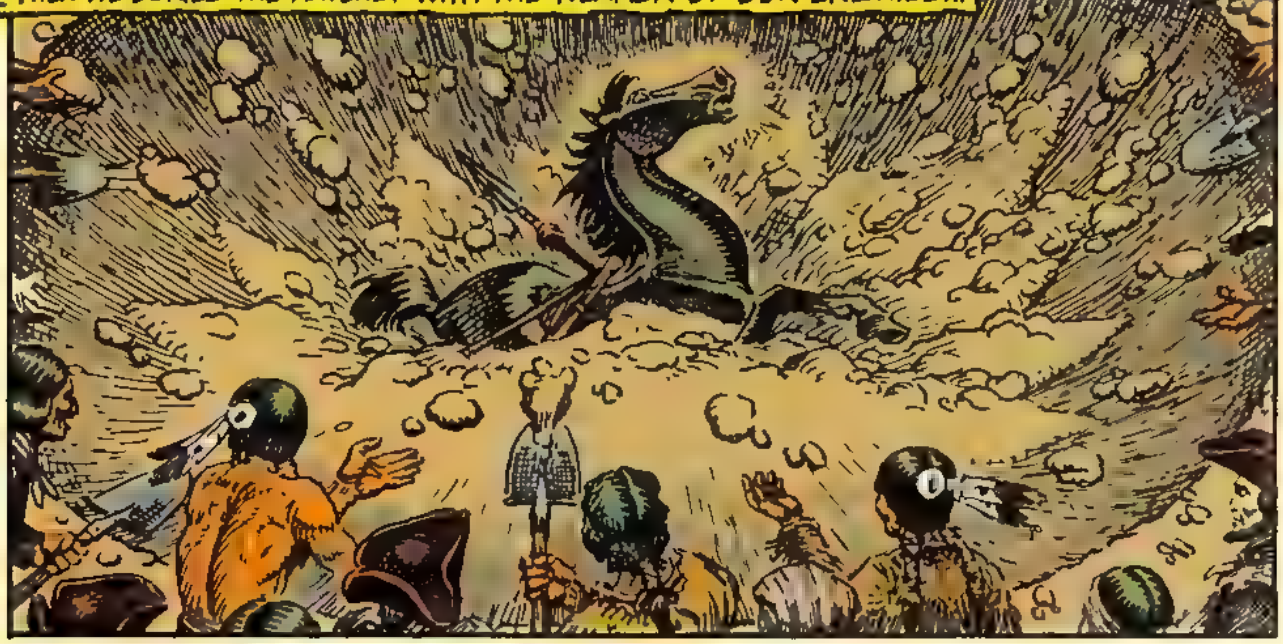


AT THEIR FORT WE EMBRACED THE SOUTHERN INVADERS.


IN A GREAT CEREMONY WE CAST THE IMPLEMENTS OF WAR INTO A PIT.

OUR CHIEFS JOINED HANDS WITH THE SPANISH CAPTAINS AND JOYFULLY DANCED AROUND THE OPEN PIT.

THEN WE BURIED THE HATCHET WITH THE WEAKER OF OUR ENEMIES...



...AND PROMISED TO LOVE THEIR DEAD GOD.

WHILE AT THEIR FORT WE LEARNED MUCH ABOUT THE PALE-FACED INTRUDERS INTO OUR DOMAIN.

WE DISCOVERED THAT THEY WORSHIPPED THEIR GOD IN LARGE LODGES...

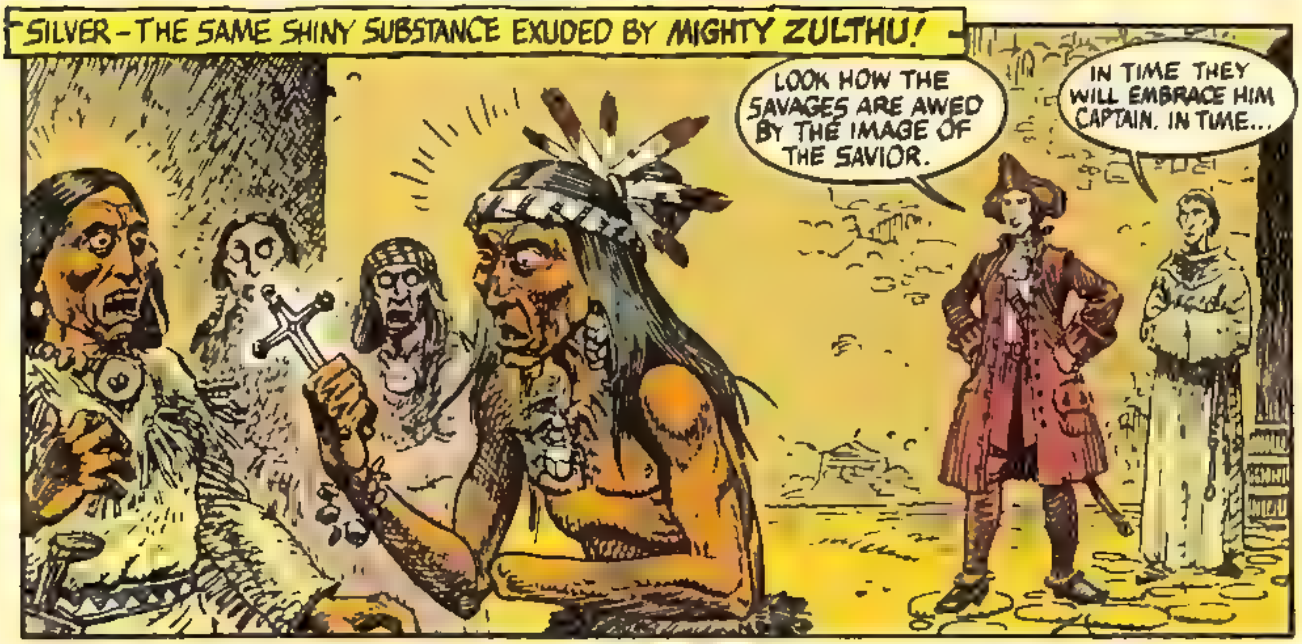
DO NOT FEAR TO ENTER HERE, MY CHILDREN. THIS IS GOD'S TEMPLE.

...DARK LIKE OUR SACRED CAVES.

MOST OF ALL WE LEARNED THAT, DESPITE WHAT THE SPANISH MEDICINE MEN SAID—

IN TRUTH THEY WORSHIPPED "SILVER".

YOU - WITCH DOCTOR! TAKE THIS AND BE REMINDED OF HE WHO DIED FOR YOUR SINS!!


SILVER - THE SAME SHINY SUBSTANCE EXUDED BY MIGHTY ZULTHU!
LOOK HOW THE SAVAGES ARE AWED BY THE IMAGE OF THE SAVIOR.
IN TIME THEY WILL EMBRACE HIM CAPTAIN. IN TIME...

WE SAVED THE MOST SERIOUS BUSINESS UNTIL THE TIME OF OUR DEPARTURE.
CAPTAIN, TO SHOW OUR GREAT LOVE FOR OUR NEW SPANISH BROTHERS WE ASK THAT YOU BUILD A STRONG FORT IN OUR COUNTRY.

THIS REQUEST CAUSED OUR HOSTS TO QUARREL AMONG THEMSELVES
SAY YES, URRUTIA. LEST WE MISS THE CHANCE TO REDEEM THEIR SOULS!
IMPOSSIBLE, PADRE. ONLY THE KING CAN DECIDE A MATTER SO IMPORTANT!

YES, WE MADE MANY PROMISES AT BEXAR, BUT IT WAS ONLY TO GAIN ADVANTAGE AGAINST OUR NORTHERN FOES, TO REMAIN IN OUR LAND – WITH OUR **TRUE GOD.**

BUT STILL THE COMANCHES PUSHED US, MORE MERCILESS THAN BEFORE. WE RETREATED BUT IT DID NOT STOP THE SLAUGHTER.

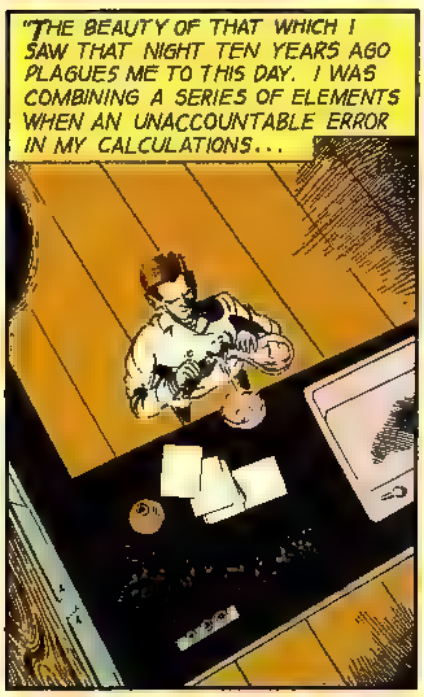
OUR NEW ALLIES AND THEIR DEADLY THUNDERSTICKS WERE USELESS TO US UNLESS WE COULD LURE THEM INTO THE CONTESTED GROUND – TO FIGHT BESIDE US.

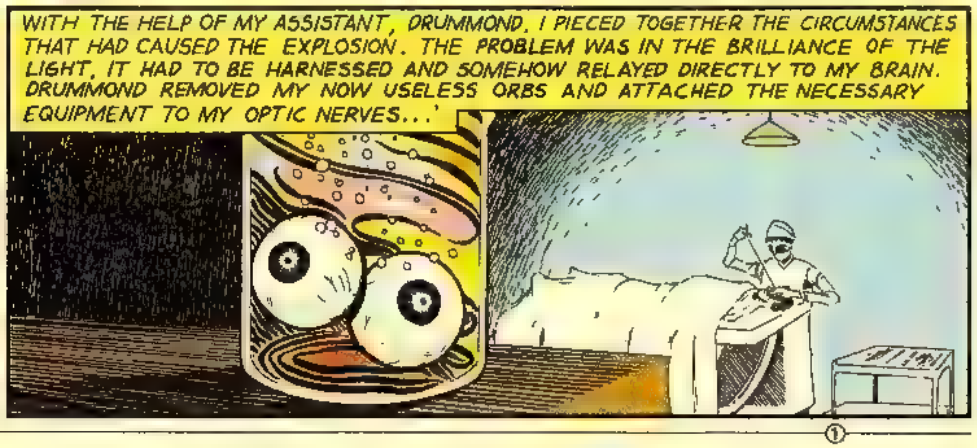
THINKING OF WHAT HAD BEEN LEARNED IN THE SPANISH CAMP, I DEVISED ANOTHER PLAN ..

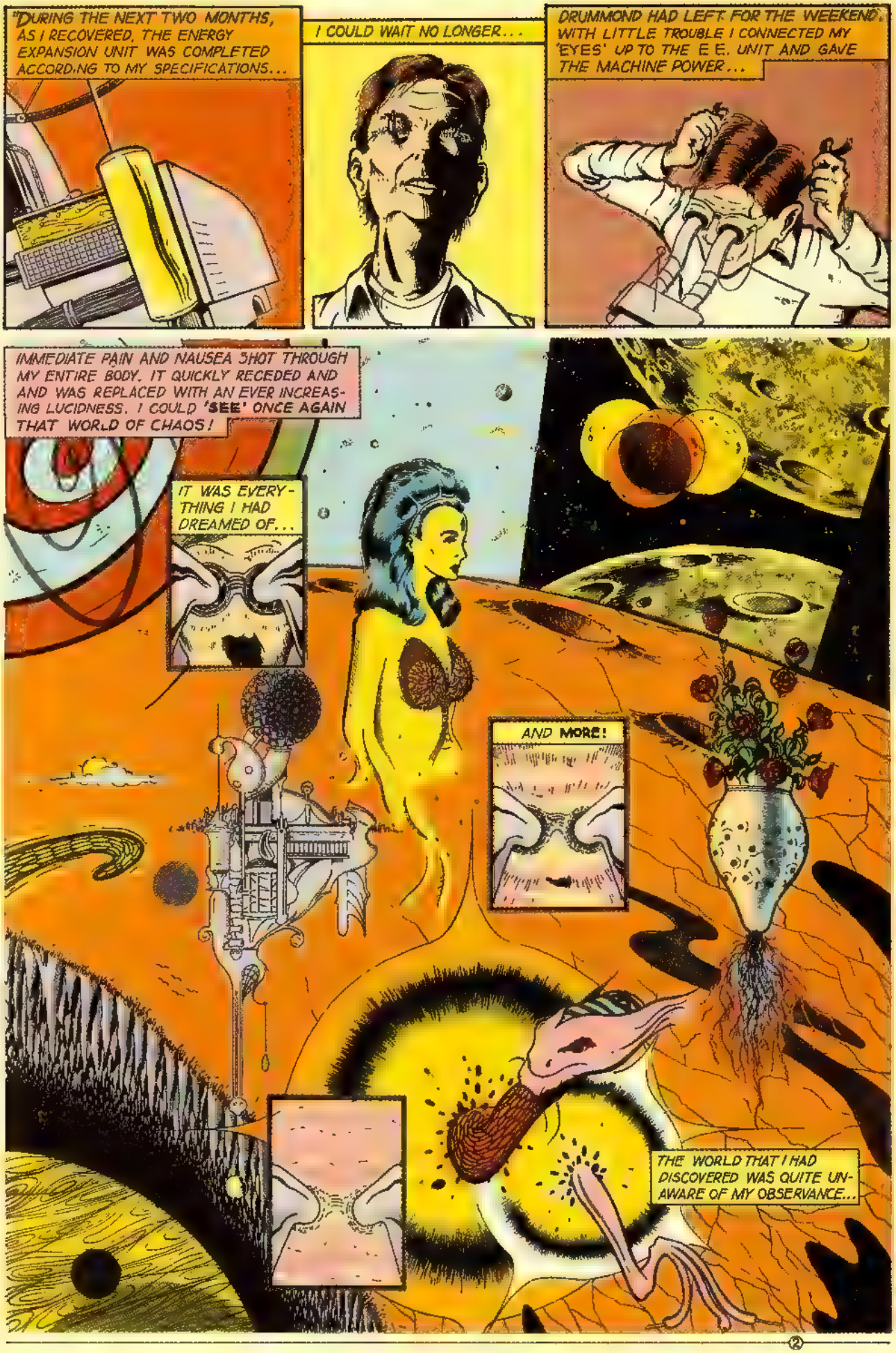
jaxon-85

TO BE CONTINUED

SIGHT UNSEEN






"DURING THE NEXT TWO MONTHS, AS I RECOVERED, THE ENERGY EXPANSION UNIT WAS COMPLETED ACCORDING TO MY SPECIFICATIONS...
I COULD WAIT NO LONGER...
DRUMMOND HAD LEFT FOR THE WEEKEND. WITH LITTLE TROUBLE I CONNECTED MY 'EYES' UP TO THE E.E. UNIT AND GAVE THE MACHINE POWER...
IMMEDIATE PAIN AND NAUSEA SHOT THROUGH MY ENTIRE BODY. IT QUICKLY RECEDED AND AND WAS REPLACED WITH AN EVER INCREASING LUCIDNESS. I COULD 'SEE' ONCE AGAIN THAT WORLD OF CHAOS!
IT WAS EVERYTHING I HAD DREAMED OF...
AND MORE!
THE WORLD THAT I HAD DISCOVERED WAS QUITE UNAWARE OF MY OBSERVANCE...

I HAD TO GET IN TOUCH WITH DRUMMOND IMMEDIATELY AND LET HIM KNOW OF MY SUCCESS!

IT WAS AT THAT MOMENT THAT I REALIZED WHAT THAT INITIAL PAIN HAD BEEN. I HAD GIVEN UP SOMETHING IN EXCHANGE FOR MY NEW FOUND KNOWLEDGE . . .

MY PHYSICAL BEING!

AAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAA

Hello Copey!

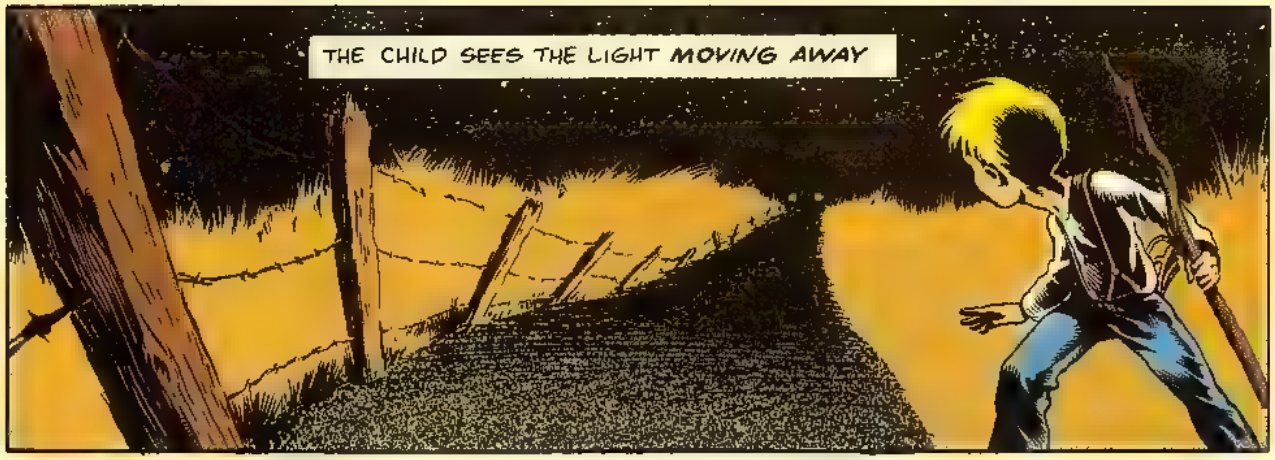
FOR ETERNITY MY SCREAMS WOULD BE HEARD BY NO ONE, FOR THEY WERE IN MY HEAD ALL IN MY HEAD.

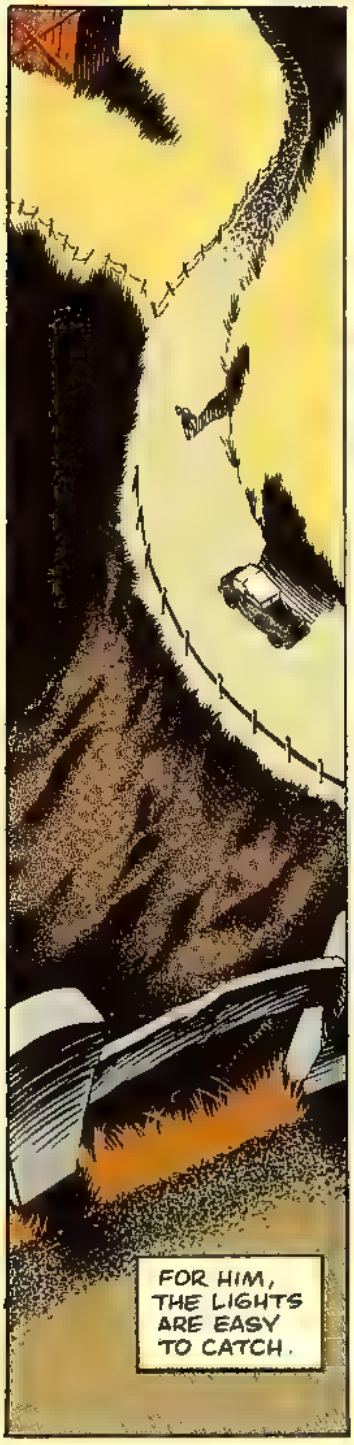
WHAT IN **HELL** WAS DR COPE TRYING TO DO? THAT MACHINE'S POWER **BURNED HIS HEAD OFF LIKE A MATCH** THE MOMENT HE TURNED IT ON!

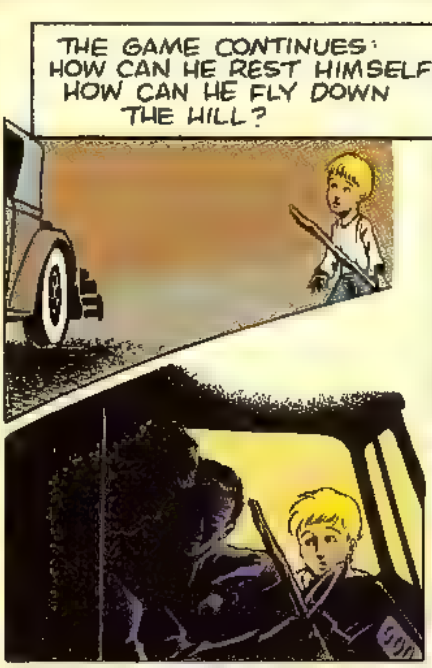
WHERE'S THAT ASSISTANT, **DRUMMOND?**

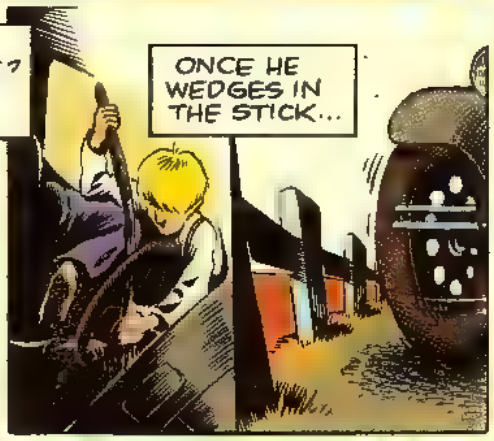
THE **end**

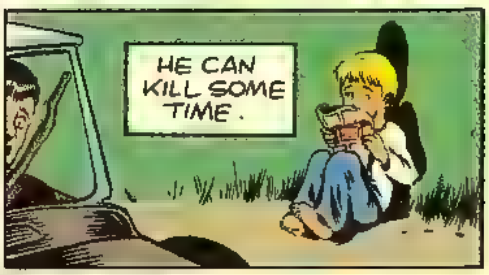
WHO IS THIS MAN?
WHERE DID HE COME FROM?
NO ONE HERE CAN TELL
ALL THAT IS KNOWN OF HIM IS THROUGH THE LIVES HE'S TAKEN, THE DAMAGE HE'S DONE.
THIS IS PART OF HIS STORY..
"KILLING TIME"
ART: SAM KIETH STORY: SAM KIETH & JOHN HOLLAND
COLORS RAY FEHRENBACH

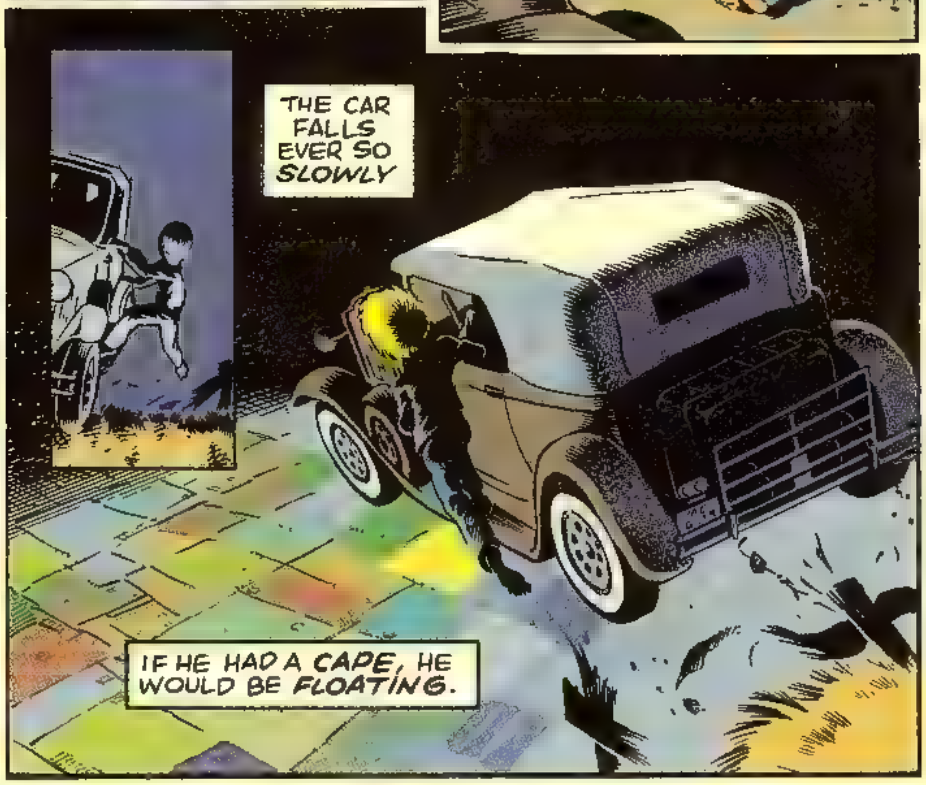

THE CHILD SEES THE LIGHT MOVING AWAY

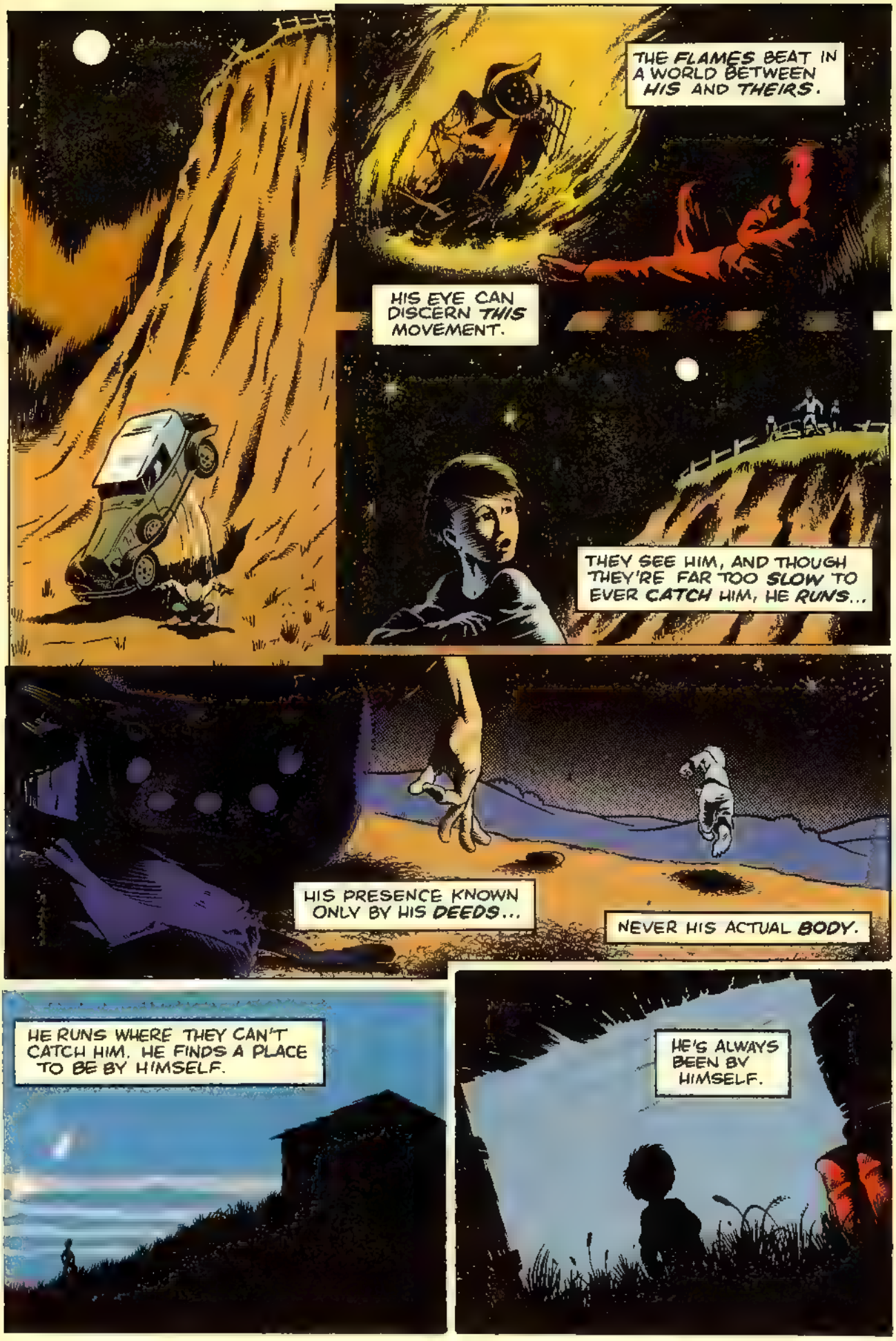

FOR HIM, THE LIGHTS ARE EASY TO CATCH.


THE GAME CONTINUES: HOW CAN HE REST HIMSELF? HOW CAN HE FLY DOWN THE HILL?


ONCE HE WEDGES IN THE STICK...

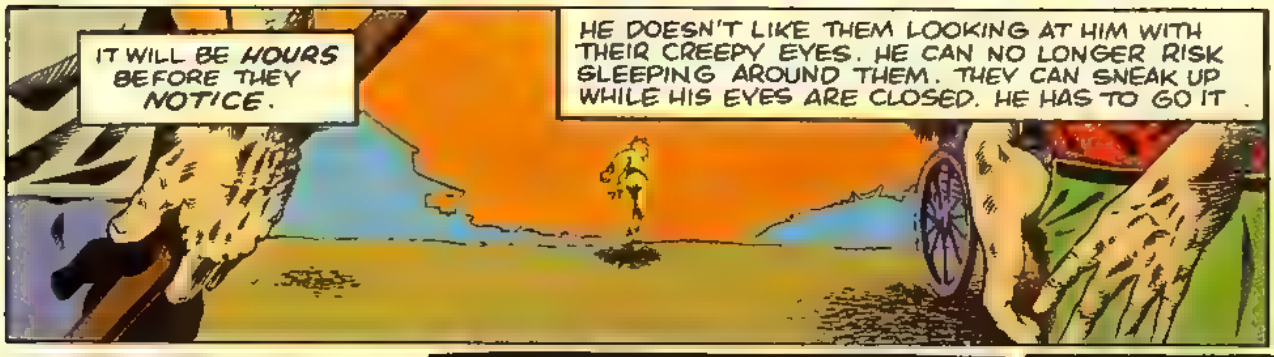

HE CAN KILL SOME TIME.


THE CAR FALLS EVER SO SLOWLY
IF HE HAD A CAPE, HE WOULD BE FLOATING.


THE FLAMES BEAT IN A WORLD BETWEEN HIS AND THEIRS.
HIS EYE CAN DISCERN THIS MOVEMENT.
THEY SEE HIM, AND THOUGH THEY'RE FAR TOO SLOW TO EVER CATCH HIM, HE RUNS...
HIS PRESENCE KNOWN ONLY BY HIS DEEDS...
NEVER HIS ACTUAL BODY.
HE RUNS WHERE THEY CAN'T CATCH HIM. HE FINDS A PLACE TO BE BY HIMSELF.
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN BY HIMSELF.

AGAIN, THEY SEE HIM.

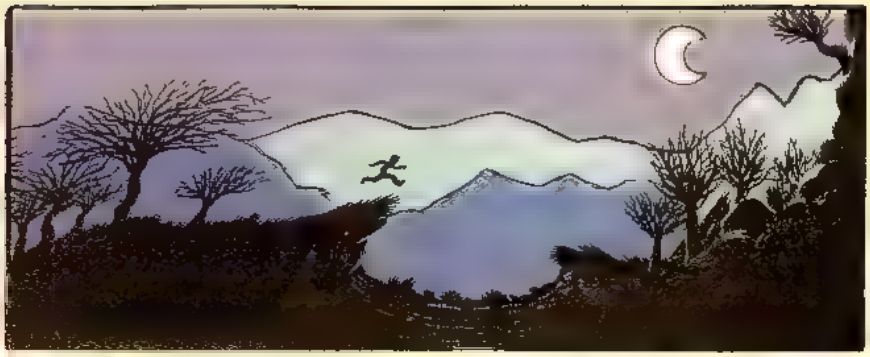
WITH HIS FIRST MOVEMENT, HE'S VANISHED.

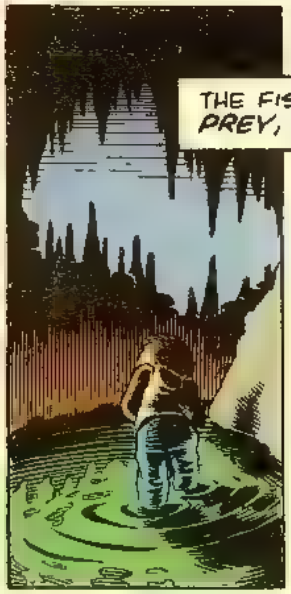

IT WILL BE HOURS BEFORE THEY NOTICE.
HE DOESN'T LIKE THEM LOOKING AT HIM WITH THEIR CREEPY EYES. HE CAN NO LONGER RISK SLEEPING AROUND THEM. THEY CAN SNEAK UP WHILE HIS EYES ARE CLOSED. HE HAS TO GO IT

ALONE

PRETTY BIRD
PRETTY FIRE

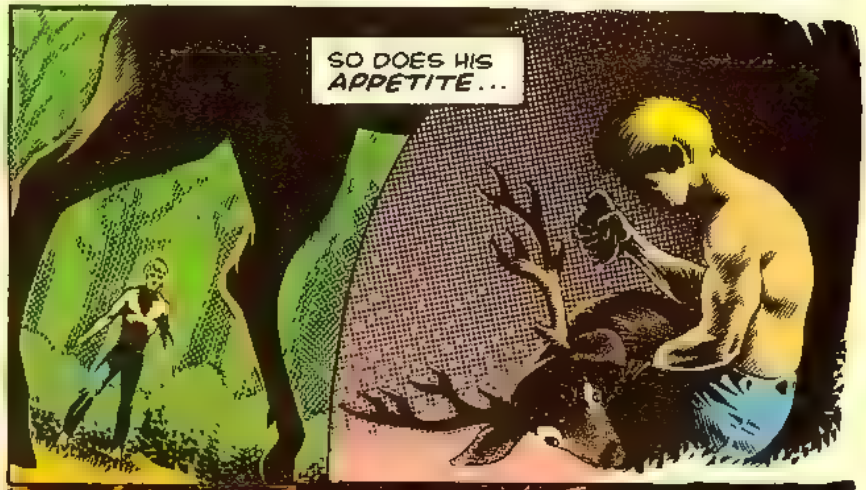
THE WILD IS MORE FUN ANYWAY.





THE FISH, ANIMALS, ANY AND ALL PREY, NEVER HAVE A CHANCE.

AS THE MAN GROWS...


SO DOES HIS APPETITE...

AND NOT MERELY FOR FOOD, BUT FOR THINGS ELUSIVE...
THINGS LIKE...

FUN.
BOREDOM CAN LEAD A MAN TO STRANGE PLACES.
STRANGE, BUT WONDERFUL!
FOOD IS EVEN EASIER TO GET HERE.
HIS FOR THE TAKING.
A MAN CAN THINK OF OTHER THINGS AFTER HE EATS.
TROUBLE IS, WHILE HE'S PHYSICALLY A MAN, HIS EMOTIONS REMAIN..
A CHILD'S.

THERE IS ALWAYS *ONE* THING THAT HOLDS HIS *ATTENTION*-- ONE THING THAT ALWAYS *MOVES!*

HE EXPLORES *FIRE* IN ITS VARIOUS *INCARNATIONS.*

HE IS SOON *IMPATIENT* WITH ANYTHING *ELSE.*

NOTHING ELSE IS LIKE *FIRE!*

HE OFTEN *RELAXES* AND WATCHES THE DEBRIS *FLOAT AWAY.*

HE WAKES FEELING *PRESSURE* ON HIS ARM.

HE WAKES *TOO LATE!*

THE LIQUID TAKES *FOREVER* TO TRAVEL INTO HIS *ARM...*

HE CANNOT ... *STAY...* ... *AWAKE...*

HE HEARS A LOW HUM. IT MUST BE COMING FROM THE BULLETS.
HE'S HEARD THE HUM BEFORE, BETWEEN SLEEPING AND WAKING.

BUT BEFORE, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN ABLE TO DODGE THEM.

HE'S NOT AFRAID. HE FEELS NOTHING BUT CURIOSITY.

EVEN AFTER THEY TOUCH HIS SKIN...

IT WILL TAKE HOURS FOR THEM TO PENETRATE...

IT WILL TAKE TIME TO KILL HIM...

BUT...
THAT'S ALL HE'S EVER HAD.

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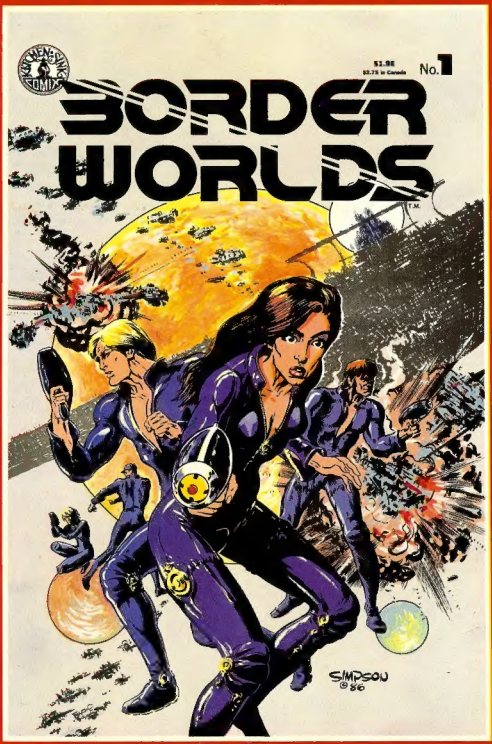

Donald Simpson's BORDER WORLDS No. 1

From Kitchen Sink Press. The first issue of Donald Simpson's new science fiction title will be on the stands in JULY. Prepare for bi-monthly lift off.